



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## WEST NILE VIRUS WEEKLY UPDATE *Ten More Dead Birds Test Positive for West Nile Virus*

County Vector Control officials announced today that ten more dead birds tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV) this week, bringing this year's total to 29 positive birds. The nine American Crows and one Raven were found in Vista, Carlsbad, Encinitas, Del Mar, Carmel Valley, Rancho Penasquitos, College Area, La Mesa, and El Cajon. Last year at this same time, Vector Control had only found five positive dead birds.

"We have never seen this many positive birds so early in the season," said Gary Erbeck, Director of the County Department of Environmental Health. "Last year we found mosquito breeding areas in the backyards of all 15 local West Nile victims. It is imperative that residents protect themselves and check their own backyards for mosquito breeding sites every week."

**Prevent Mosquito Breeding:** Backyard water sources are ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Residents should dump or remove anything that can hold water, such as potted plants and saucers, rain gutters, buckets, trash cans, children's toys, old spare tires and wheelbarrows. Mosquito fish may be used to control mosquito breeding in backyard water sources such as unused swimming pools, ponds, fountains and horse troughs.

**Protect Yourself from Mosquito Bites:** You can protect yourself from the virus by staying inside when mosquitoes are most active and by wearing long sleeves and pants when outdoors, especially at dawn or dusk. Use insect repellents containing DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus when you are outdoors. Keep screens on doors and windows and make sure the screens are in good condition.

**Report Mosquito Breeding and Dead Birds:** County Vector Control staff continues to pick up and test dead crows, ravens, jays, hawks and owls that are reported. Call Vector Control for instructions on how to deal with the bird. Dead birds do not need to be reported if: they have been dead more than 24 hours; have been hit by a car, shot, or killed by animals; are covered with ants or flies; have a foul odor; or their bodies are not intact. To report dead birds or mosquito breeding areas, such as inoperative swimming pools or standing water, please call County Vector Control at 858-694-2888. For more information about West Nile virus, call 1-888-551-INFO (4636) or visit [www.SDFightTheBite.com](http://www.SDFightTheBite.com).

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